

MAY 4 1964

TEMPLETON 8-8137

THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE

OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

NEW YORK ACADEMY OF SCIENCES BUILDING
TWO EAST SIXTY-THIRD STREET
NEW YORK 21, N. Y.



CHARTERED 1828

April 30, 1964

Professor Joshua Lederberg
Department of Genetics
Stanford University School of Medicine
Palo Alto, Calif.

Dear Professor Lederberg:

I am sure you remember The American Institute of the City of New York. As a matter of fact Joe Kraus who is on the Board of Trustees of The Institute and who is Coordinator of the National Science Fair with Science Service in Washington, D. C., says you have fond memories of working in The Institute's laboratory, under Dr. Henry Weber while you were a student at Stuyvesant High School.

The reason for my letter is thus; The New York Mirror, who had been co-sponsoring the Science Fairs for the past eight years, closed very suddenly last October leaving the finances of The American Institute in a very sad state. Abraham and Straus in Brooklyn (a member of the Federated Department Stores) is considering co-sponsoring the Science Fairs in The Mirror's place and I would greatly appreciate a letter from you giving your views on why you, as a Nobel Prize Winner, formerly encouraged by The Institute, think the encouragement of youth in science at the secondary school level is important.

Since 1928 the prime activity of The American Institute has been holding School Science Fairs in cooperation with the New York City Board of Education and New York State. These Fairs are held for students of the private, parochial and public schools of grades 5 through 12. Up to \$10,000. in New York State funds is awarded to these students each year. However, this money is earmarked specifically for awards and The Institute must raise, through membership dues and contributions, the cost of operating expenses, such as printing the posters for school bulletin boards, booklets of rules and regulations, postage and clerical help. The Board of Education underwrites some of the school-incurred expenses such as room proctors, custodial costs, etc. The budget for these operating expenses is approximately \$15,000. annually. The New York Mirror has contributed two-thirds of this amount and the balance was raised from industry (enclosed is a booklet of rules and regulations in which the sponsors are listed on page four).

Abraham & Straus has asked that I contact former Science Fair winners and persons who have been associated with The Institute to express their views as to the worthiness of this activity. Evidently they want to justify their contribution.

5/5/64 *trans attached as returned*

- - dedicated to the encouragement and furtherance of science and industry since 1828

Robert L. GHT

I am enclosing a questionnaire that went out today to our former Major and Navy Award winners and I anticipate their favorable reactions to the Science Fairs.

The financial state at The American Institute is at present so crucial that if we do not raise the money before this fall The American Institute will be forced to close after having been in existence since 1828.

I know you must have a very busy schedule but I do hope that you can take time out to send us this letter which we hope will impress Abraham & Straus enough to support the continuance of the School Science Fairs in the five boroughs of the City of New York.

Very sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "R. F. Light".

Robert F. Light
President

RFL:mc
enc.